United Nations S/PV.5440

# Security Council

Sixty-first year

Provisional

## 5440th meeting

Wednesday, 17 May 2006, 10.15 a.m.
New York

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| *President:* | Mr. Bolton | (United States of America) |
| *Members:* | Argentina | Mr. D'Alotto |
| | China | Mr. Zhang Yishan |
| | Denmark | Ms. Lei |
| | France | Mr. De La Sablière |
| | Ghana | Nana Effah-Apenteng |
| | Greece | Mr. Vassilakis |
| | Japan | Mr. Kitaoka |
| | Peru | Mr. Raúl Rouga |
| | Qatar | Mr. Al-Nasser |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Churkin |
| | Slovakia | Mr. Burian |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sir Emyr Jones Parry |
| | United Republic of Tanzania | Mr. Mamingi |
| | United States of America | Mr. Bolton |

**Agenda**

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 18 April 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2006/248)

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06-35165 (E)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**The situation in the Middle East**

**Letter dated 18 April 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2006/248)**

**The President** (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Lebanon, in which she requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ziade (Lebanon) took a seat at the Council table.*

**The President** (*spoke in French*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2006/248, which contains the text of a letter dated 18 April 2006 from the Secretary-General, transmitting the third semi-annual report on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004).

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2006/298, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Denmark, France, Slovakia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I wish to draw members' attention to document S/2006/259, containing the text of a letter dated 24 April 2006 from the Syrian Arab Republic addressed to the Secretary-General.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

*A vote was taken by show of hands.*

*In favour:*

Argentina, Congo, Denmark, France, Ghana, Greece, Japan, Peru, Qatar, Slovakia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America

*Against:*

None

*Abstentions:*

China, Russian Federation

**The President** (*spoke in French*): The result of the voting is as follows: 13 votes in favour, none against and 2 abstentions. The draft resolution has therefore been adopted as resolution 1680 (2006).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council wishing to make a statement following the voting.

**Mr. Churkin** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation has consistently advocated the strengthening of stability in Lebanon and the normalization of the situation in Syria, thereby promoting relations of equality and genuine good-neighbourliness between those countries in the interests of the Lebanese and Syrian peoples and strengthening security in the region.

We are convinced that Lebanon's sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity can be strengthened exclusively through dialogue between Damascus and Beirut. Moreover, recent positive progress in the settlement of a number of border issues between the two countries clearly demonstrates that the opportunities exist to do so.

Today's resolution is a departure from the aforementioned tasks. It does not help to achieve a constructive settlement of the issues pending between the two countries or to further establish mutual understanding between them. The Russian delegation did not see any particular need at this stage for any further substantive reaction on the part of the Security Council on issues related to Syrian-Lebanese relations.

Nevertheless, we expressed our willingness to agree to an official presidential statement, offering our own amendments and proposals. Unfortunately, the

sponsors of the resolution did not take those duly into account and full agreement could not be reached. The sponsors' approach was not in line with the established practice of the Security Council and should not set a precedent in this principal organ for the maintenance of international peace and security.

On that basis, the Russian Federation found it impossible to support the resolution.

**Mr. D'Alotto** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation wishes to explain its vote in favour of resolution 1680 (2006), which the Council has just adopted.

My delegation supports the implementation of all the provisions of resolution 1559 (2004), which remains the basic text to guide the work of the Security Council on this issue. In that regard, my country does not believe it necessary to reinterpret the operative paragraphs of that resolution or to keep saddling the parties with additional obligations. In our opinion, we must pursue the implementation of that resolution and find a satisfactory solution to such issues as the disarmament and disbanding of the Lebanese militias and the extension of Lebanese authority throughout the territory of the country. For us, the best way to resolve those problems is through the Lebanese national dialogue that began last March.

My delegation believes that the language of paragraph 4 of today's resolution should be interpreted in the light of the relevant provisions of international law on diplomatic affairs. The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations is specific in its determination that the establishment of diplomatic relations and mutual diplomatic representation must take place through mutual consent of the States involved. My country does not believe that the Security Council should become involved in these matters, which are solely of a bilateral nature. Argentina believes that paragraph 4 of today's resolution does not establish a precedent that could be invoked in the future on this issue or on other agenda items of the Council. We shall continue to affirm that the establishment of diplomatic relations and the delimitation of borders are matters which should be decided by the States involved through dialogue and negotiation without external interference.

We encourage Lebanon and Syria to move forward in the coming months along this path, and we welcome the statement of high-level Syrian officials in that regard.

In the process of negotiating this draft resolution, my delegation put forward a number of amendments in order to spell out the aforementioned position. A number of our suggestions were accepted by the sponsors and my country was therefore able to vote in favour of the draft resolution. Let me emphasize, however, that my delegation will insist that any future Security Council action on the basis of this resolution should be fully consistent with the relevant provisions of international law. It should not exceed the framework defined in the operative part of resolution 1559 (2004).

**Mr. Zhang Yishan** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): It has been the consistent view of China that the principle of respect for sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-interference in domestic affairs should be upheld in international relations. That is also the core principle in the foreign policy of China. It is also a fundamental principle established in the United Nations Charter. China fully understands and supports the desire and demand of Lebanon to establish diplomatic relations and to define its borders with its neighbours. We sincerely hope that Lebanon and Syria will continue bilateral dialogue so that an appropriate solution can be gradually found.

In the light of that, China hoped that the sponsors of today's draft resolution would make corresponding changes to the draft text so that consensus could be reached in the Council and a positive, balanced and constructive message could be sent out. We have taken note, with appreciation, of the efforts made by the sponsors. Regrettably, the changes made did not resolve our fundamental concerns. Therefore, China was obliged to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

At present, Lebanon is at a crucial historical turning point. We congratulate the Government and the people of Lebanon on the progress that they have made. We sincerely hope that stability and unity can be maintained in Lebanon, which would not only contribute to domestic security and development but would promote the peace and stability of its neighbours and of the entire Middle East region.

All external help should be offered with a constructive attitude. It should take into full consideration the sensitivity and complexity of the

issues concerned and should avoid adding new elements of instability. China is ready to join the rest of the international community in a common effort to find solutions to questions between Palestine and Israel, between Syria and Lebanon, and between Lebanon and Israel, so that a comprehensive, just and lasting peace can be established in the Middle East at an early date.

**Mr. Al-Nasser** (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation voted in favour of draft resolution S/2006/298. The position of Qatar is firm in its respect for the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon. Our position calls for full respect for Lebanese efforts to resolve difficult national problems through the Lebanese national dialogue. In that regard, my delegation stresses that it welcomes that dialogue and that it encourages all the parties to strive to make progress concerning relations between Lebanon and Syria.

We affirm that, ultimately, the depth of historical relations and the common geography of the two neighbouring countries cannot permit any tension to overcome the friendly relations between the two countries. Parties to the national dialogue were unanimous in calling for positive and friendly relations between the two States, based on mutual respect. Furthermore, the high-level committees formed jointly by the two countries indicate the mutual respect between the two countries and their efforts to resolve all bilateral issues between them in a manner that does not touch upon the sovereignty of either.

On another front, we regret that the resolution did not mention any breaches by Israel of the Blue Line. These are among the elements that are hampering the full implementation of resolution 1559 (2004), not to mention the fact that they are a breach of Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as the Secretary-General has stated in his reports to the Security Council.

**The President** (*spoke in French*): There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

*The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.*